UNITED
NATIONS

S

Security Council

Distr.
GENERAL

S/1997/376
16 May 1997
ENGLISH
ORIGINAL: ARABIC

IDENTICAL LETTERS DATED 15 MAY 1997 FROM THE PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF IRAQ TO THE UNITED NATIONS ADDRESSED TO THE SECRETARY-GENERAL AND TO THE PRESIDENT OF THE SECURITY COUNCIL

On instructions from my Government, I have the honour to transmit to you herewith a letter dated 15 May 1997 addressed to you by Mr. Mohammed Said Al-Sahaf, Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Iraq. The letter gives particulars of Turkish acts of military aggression against Iraq's territory and airspace, the most recent of which was the Turkish incursion into Iraqi territory on 13 May 1997, and it calls upon the United Nations to meet its responsibilities as laid down in the Charter and to halt the intimidation and aggression to which Iraq is being subjected.

I should be grateful if you would have the present letter and its annex circulated as a document of the Security Council.

(Signed) Nizar HAMDOON
Ambassador
Permanent Representative

97-12975 (E) 190597 190597 200597

/...

Annex

Identical letters dated 15 May 1997 from the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Iraq addressed to the Secretary-General and to the President of the Security Council

I should like to inform you that at 0300 hours on 13 May 1997 Turkish armed forces carried out a fresh incursion into Iraqi territory when two Turkish forces consisting of four armoured columns supported by helicopters advanced into northern Iraq. The first force came from the Silopi area of Turkey and advanced towards the Zakho area, and the second came from the Cevizli and Damarca areas of Turkey and advanced towards the Samatah and Bahnunah areas north of Amadiyah. The forces in question cut the Zakho - Ibrahim al-Khalil road, and the incursion caused our citizens in the area great loss of life and inflicted heavy damage to property.

In my letter of 6 May 1997 (S/1997/354, annex) I gave you details of the violations committed by Turkish armed forces on a daily basis up to 4 May 1997. Such violations have continued in subsequent days, as set forth hereunder.

1. Between 1130 and 1220 hours on 5 May 1997 Turkish fighter aircraft violated the airspace of the Republic of Iraq with eight sorties, each by a two-aircraft formation, in the Amadiyah, Mosul and Tall Afar areas. Between 0823 and 0825 hours on the same day two Turkish helicopters violated the airspace of the Republic of Iraq in the Amadiyah area.

2. Between 0950 and 1750 hours on 6 May 1997 Turkish fighter aircraft violated the airspace of the Republic of Iraq with nine sorties in the Dohuk, Zakho, Batufah, Ayn Sifni, Pibu, Amadiyah and Sarsank areas.

3. Between 0825 and 1510 hours on 7 May 1997 Turkish fighter aircraft violated the airspace of the Republic of Iraq with 13 sorties, each by a two-aircraft formation, in the Ayn Sifni, Zakho, Irbil, Amadiyah, Koysanjak, Dohuk, Tall Kayf, Kalak and Rawanduz areas.

4. Between 1129 and 1234 hours on 8 May 1997 Turkish fighter aircraft violated the airspace of the Republic of Iraq with four sorties, each by a single aircraft, in the Zakho, Amadiyah and Pibu areas.

5. Between 1015 and 1045 hours on 9 May 1997 Turkish fighter aircraft violated the airspace of the Republic of Iraq with four sorties, two by two-aircraft formations and two by a single aircraft, in the Zakho, Amadiyah and Batufah areas.

6. Between 1035 and 1145 hours on 10 May 1997 Turkish fighter aircraft violated the airspace of the Republic of Iraq with eight sorties, carried out by four two-aircraft formations, in the Zakho, Batufah and Amadiyah areas.

7. Between 1110 and 1752 hours on 11 May 1997 Turkish fighter aircraft violated the airspace of the Republic of Iraq to a depth of not less than

20 kilometres inside Iraqi territory with three sorties, each by a single aircraft, in the Zakho and Amadiyah areas.

8. Between 1005 and 1155 hours on 12 May 1997 Turkish fighter aircraft violated the airspace of the Republic of Iraq with 12 sorties, carried out by six two-aircraft formations, in the Zakho, Dohuk, Amadiyah, Qush and Sarsank areas.

9. The Turkish side has recently stepped up the number of sorties carried out by its fighter aircraft in violation of the airspace of the Republic of Iraq. There were 43 such sorties during the month of April 1997, while the figures for sorties violating the airspace of the Republic of Iraq in January, February and March 1997 were 6, 12 and 7 respectively.

In conveying to you the details of this new incursion and of these violations by the Turkish armed forces, the Government of Iraq expresses its condemnation of such acts of military aggression. It does so because the practices of the Turkish forces, as represented by their repeated shelling of towns and villages in Iraq and their unlawful incursions into Iraqi territory, are in flagrant violation of Iraq's sovereignty and the inviolability of its territory and airspace, just as they are incompatible with relations of good-neighbourliness, the Charter of the United Nations, the norms of international law and the 1926 Iraq-Turkey boundary agreement. These practices may also undermine stability in the region as a whole, which is suffering primarily from the anomalous situation created by the United States of America and its allies in northern Iraq.

As stated in my previous letter, the Turkish Government bears full international responsibility for the acts of aggression it commits inside Iraqi territory and for all their consequences, regardless of the alleged reasons it gives.

The Government of Iraq reserves its legitimate right under international law to determine an appropriate response to such brutal military aggression and to seek compensation for the damage caused by these Turkish violations of Iraq's territory and airspace and for the human suffering inflicted on Iraqi citizens by these acts of aggression. Through you, it renews its call to the Government of Turkey to reconsider its policy with respect to the situation in northern Iraq, to promote the collaboration of the two countries on the basis of considerations of good-neighbourliness and mutual respect for sovereignty and to eliminate the reasons for the persistence of a situation that jeopardizes the interests of both countries.

As, through you, I reiterate my country's call to its Turkish neighbour to respect Iraq's sovereignty and territorial integrity, I express the hope that the United Nations will meet its responsibilities as laid down in the Charter and that it will halt the intimidation and aggression to which my country is constantly being subjected.

I should be grateful if you would have this letter circulated as a document of the Security Council.

(Signed) Mohammed Said AL-SAHAF
Minister for Foreign Affairs
of the Republic of Iraq